



# An analysis of Utah's K-3 Reading Improvement Program



Institute of Education Sciences

U.S. Department of Education





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Summary

**June 2007**

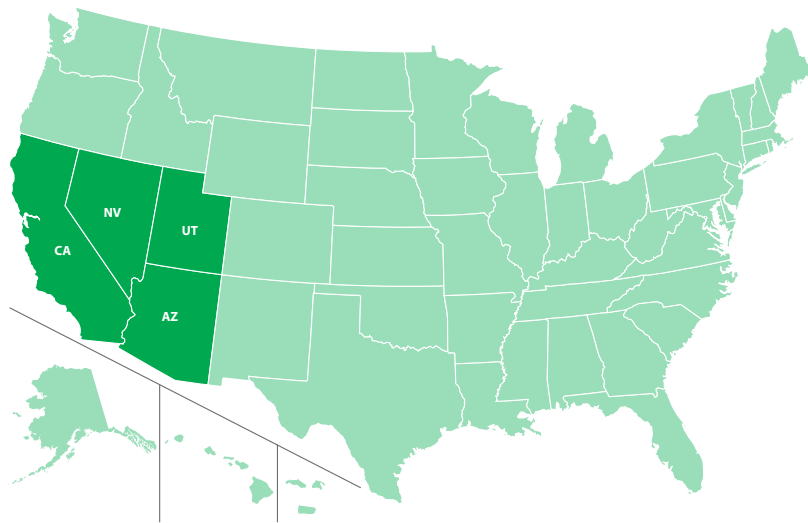
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June 2007

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Makkonen, R., Huang, C-W, & Koehler, P. (2007). *An analysis of Utah's K–3 Reading Improvement Program* (Issues & Answers Report, REL 2007–No. 002). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory West. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>.

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## Summary

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### **More districts and charter schools reported implementing key elements of the state literacy framework and meeting their own goals.**

Utah's K-3 Reading Improvement Program provides state matching funds to help districts and charter schools achieve the state's goal of having third graders read at or above grade level. All 40 Utah school districts took part in both Year 1 (2004/05) and Year 2 (2005/06) of the program, and the number of participating charter schools increased from 10 (of 12) in Year 1 to 17 (of 20) in Year 2.

With the aim of informing Utah legislators and education officials on program activities, use of funds, and outcomes, Utah's Superintendent of Public Instruction, Patti Harrington, asked Regional Education Laboratory West at WestEd to review district and charter school participation during the first two years of the program. The Year 1 analysis was presented in early 2006.

This report presents the Year 2 analysis, which addresses the following key questions:

- How have participating school districts and charter schools carried out the provisions of the state legislation?

Program funds most commonly supported key components of the Utah K-3 Literacy Framework for Successful Instruction and Intervention, specifically tiered literacy instruction (a targeted reading intervention model), small-group literacy instruction, and focused professional development. More than two-thirds of program participants also reported funding literacy coaches or reading specialists and training for staff to administer and interpret reading assessments to monitor student progress and guide instruction. Both tiered and small-group instruction were used more widely in Year 2 than in Year 1, as were the state's Student Tutoring Achievement for Reading program, new basal reading programs and leveled reading libraries, and before- and after-school literacy programs.

- What outcomes are evident after two years of program implementation?



More participating districts and charters reported meeting their self-established goals in Year 2, and statewide grade-level proficiency rates—identified through English Language Arts Criterion-Referenced Test results—increased slightly for grades 1 and 3 but remained about the same for

grade 2. However, it is difficult to assess the program’s influence on these changes, as there is no control group and researchers did not observe the local efforts under way in schools.

**June 2007**